

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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CHAPTER XXXIII. THE FIRST OPERA.

THE theatre at Unterberg was not very large, but it was beautifully proportioned; from every part of the house one could see and hear well. The comparatively early hour at which the play began allowed the spectators to dispense with much toilette; so the sisters were not conspicuous in their ordinary summer dresses, supplemented by the pink bows and some beautiful roses in their hair. For a bouquet had come that very morning, brought by Austin himself, as usual, when the children were there, and only presented at the door. He chose this time so that Grace could not feel his presence awkward, if, indeed, Grace thought at all about him, which he much doubted.

How Sibyl's heart bounded when Frau Hanson called out: "Are you ready, ladies? The Professorin waits without for us," and in the courtyard stood, not only the Professorin but the two Englishmen. She raised her head and looked out with such bright, laughing eyes that Sidney again indulged in mental anathemas that Fate had made a poor teacher so pretty. That mattered not this evening, however, for they were to enjoy themselves, and Sidney, always ready to "bow to the prettiest," secured Sibyl, leaving Austin to see after the old ladies and Grace, who began thanking the Frau Professorin again.

"It is such a pleasure to Sibyl; you know, she is so young," she added, as if an apology were due for her.

"That is very natural," said the good lady; "but you yourself, Fräulein Evans, are not so very old, don't you like the play?"

"I have never been to one," said Grace. "I dare say I shall like it; but I have always lived all my life in the country, where no such things as plays and operas were heard of."

"I hope, for that reason, you don't condemn them?" said Austin, so seriously that Grace laughed.

"That would be very foolish, I think. No, only——"

"Only what?" Austin already repented having given in to this plan.

"Only we are poor," said Grace, lowering her voice and speaking in English, "and we must learn to do without many things; even the taste of pleasure may be dangerous for us."

"Not for you," he answered, and then added, so as if to spare her words: "You must tell me what you think of it afterwards. The question of play-going has been a bone of contention for many generations in old England. Some people, you know, argue that the mind is raised and cultivated by it, and that the result of evil being put so forcibly before us there can be no better moral lesson."

"What do you think?" asked Grace, gently; but they had now reached the theatre, so he was saved the difficulty of answering just then. How proud he was of giving Grace his arm up the steps, and guiding her through the crowd, and at last placing her where she would see well, though, of course, she gave up the front place to Sibyl. The two old ladies declared they liked being at the back; but they had been to the play hundreds of times before, and knew "Faust" by heart.

Austin was behind Grace, but so placed that he could see her face. The box had been well chosen; it was of the best. Austin gave a glance round whilst Sidney went off in search of programmes. A little way off, also in a box, sat a gentleman, quite alone. Austin thought for a minute that he must know him, but then recollected that it was the Count who lived opposite. What was his astonishment to see him look through his opera glasses, put them down, then bow towards him! He turned round to see to whom he was bowing, and he saw Sibyl return the salute very slightly, then turn her head quite away. Did Grace see this? No, she was leaning back talking to Frau Hanson. It had been done so quickly that no one but himself had noticed it, and for one minute he pondered how Sibyl knew the German Count, but the next moment he remembered that German men are always bowing on every possible occasion, and that most likely Sibyl had passed him somewhere on the stairs, or in a courtyard, and that the Count had chosen to bow to the pretty English girl.

"He has no business to recognise her openly like this, though," he thought, angry for the moment; but Grace's voice made him forget the incident.

"You did not tell me your opinion," she said, shyly. Whereupon he plunged into the two opposite views of acting, leaving the question so well balanced that he divided her favour evenly between the two opinions.

Sibyl was hardly breathing, she was so excited with all she saw—the crowd of people; the painted drop-scene; the many chandeliers sparkling like jewels. Then the orchestra began; and when the curtain drew up and the opera began, then Sibyl clasped her hands and forgot everybody around her. Grace was hardly less absorbed, only it was in a different way. There was no feverish eagerness about her; but her whole being seemed centred in Marguerite's story, and in Marguerite herself. Unfortunately this Marguerite had not been able to resist making herself beautiful by the help of modern dress, so she was arrayed in white silk, which looked incongruous near to the spinning-wheel.

When the curtain dropped at the end of the first act, Sibyl remained silent. It was Grace who first looked up towards Austin.

"It is just like real life—oh, almost

too real. I shall think she is Marguerite, and that it is all—all true."

"Don't, please don't think that, Miss Evans. It would spoil your pleasure for nothing. I dare say the lady who represents Goethe's heroine is as happy as possible."

"What do you think about the opera now, Miss Sibyl?" said Sidney, himself rather sobered by the earnestness of the young ladies. He wondered what London girls would say to them. "Awfully unsophisticated," he thought; but he was, all the same, much amused by them. Austin was almost sorry the story happened to be this one. He wished Grace had seen something less sad for her first piece, though beforehand it had not occurred to him; and as to the German ladies, the sorrows of Marguerite were for them purely matters of stage effect. "Fräulein Helwig does not do it so well as Frau König; but then she has a better voice," and so on.

"I think I should like to be an actress," said Sibyl. "It must be nice to make so many people believe what you tell them to believe, and be glad or sorry as you choose them to be."

Austin fetched some refreshments, and then the curtain rose a second time. Austin seemed less able to follow the actors; but, shading his eyes, he watched Grace. Again came the feeling that he must have seen her before, only not being able to remember any one of her name, he settled that he must have seen her face in a dream. There must be, thought he, some men who have seen the face of the woman they will love in their dreams or waking fancies. Great love may have a second sight of the one—the only one—who will have that power. This was rather far-fetched and metaphysical, but it pleased him and made him believe that Grace was a preordained being, fashioned expressly for him alone. Certainly, in the honest way she looked at him as she spoke, there was no sign of the least reciprocal feeling. Now the sweet face became sadder, and once Austin saw a tear slowly run down her cheeks, which she secretly brushed away. He hated himself now, because what he had intended for pleasure was only pain. He forgot there is a sweet sorrow, and that tears do not hurt that are shed about imaginary sorrows.

"Come and walk in the 'foyer,'" he said. "Will you not also stretch your legs a little, Frau Professorin?"

But it was no trouble to the good ladies to sit still; the trouble with them was to be moving. Besides, seated at the back of the box, they were both diligently knitting.

"It is good for young people. Make haste, there will not be long," said Frau Hanson. So it happened that just for a few moments Austin found himself alone with Grace, feeling, however, unable to say anything worth saying.

"You are not enjoying this, Miss Evans."

"Yes, I am; but it is very, very sad."

"Are you sorry you came?"

"No, I think not; but there are so many sad things on earth, it seems almost wrong to add to them."

Austin could not know the real meaning of her words or denote the ring of truth in the tone; but he wanted to make her happy, to hear her say that life was bright and beautiful, because she was loved. But how was this object to be attained? He felt that he had thrown prudence and preconceived notions to the winds, and that he wanted to—make love. No, that phrase was so vulgarised; but to show this same Grace that he loved her and honoured her above all other women. But how could he? He did not know how to begin with one so utterly trustful and unconscious, and he could not frighten away, by a look or a word, that unconscious expression from her face.

Patience—there was one month more.

Then the few minutes were gone and the chance lost, and yet not lost, because had he had an hour alone with Grace, he would have said nothing of his love.

"Where is Sibyl?" she said then. Austin felt almost jealous of that ever tender, ever watchful care for the younger sister. He looked round and perceived her coming towards them rather hastily, leaning on Sidney's arm.

Was he doing wrong to put Sidney in the way of these girls? Austin made up his mind that if he saw any sign of a flirtation, he would go away and take Sidney with him. "He can never mean anything," he thought, "so he shall not trifle with them; with me it is otherwise, though I almost wish it were not. What will my mother say to a poor unknown daughter-in-law? But if she saw her! Then it would be different; she would at once love her!"

Sibyl and Sidney Jones had wandered slowly round to the opposite side of the theatre, when suddenly Sibyl, looking up, saw a man just in front of them with his

back to them. She blushed, though no one was looking, and drew Sidney back.

"Don't go on there," she said, hurriedly; "I should like to go the other way. I—I see some one I do not wish to meet."

"Certainly," said Sidney, good-naturedly. "One can cut one's enemies here by just slipping into a box."

Sibyl laughed nervously.

"But suppose one's enemy should follow one in the same box?" she asked.

"That would certainly be close quarters. Ah! there is the warning bell, and there is your sister with my mentor. They suit each other wonderfully, don't they?"

"Grace is very, very good," murmured Sibyl, not coupling the names together. She was a little upset.

"It is time to go in," said Austin, meeting them.

"I thought you were lost," put in Grace, laughing. "Well, Sibyl, does the opera come up to your expectation?"

"Yes. It is just like life—better than a novel."

"That depends on who has written it," said Sidney. "Some novels are better than plays, because one can go to sleep over them, and take them up again where one left off; an opera requires all one's attention."

Before the opera was over, and Marguerite seen ascending to heaven in white silk, Sibyl was sobbing, and Grace looked miserable. However, both laughed over their own foolish grief when the curtain had gone down for the last time, and Sibyl's cheerful tones came back before her cloak was on again; she was ashamed of her tears. The walk home was under a bright starlight. Grace was very silent, and allowed Sibyl to chatter on to the two men. She herself had seen so much to think about, that she could not talk much.

"I think you are inclined to dislike play-going, Miss Evans," said Austin, at parting.

"No, not quite; I have enjoyed it all, very, very much. Thank you for your kindness. Good night, Frau Professorin."

Sibyl was not quite herself as she undressed, and even cried a little more; but she said she knew not why, so Grace laughed and declared that this should be the last time they spent their leisure in crying.

"It has been a wonderful day, Gracie; I shall never forget it. I wish I were clever enough to be an actress or a singer."

"I am glad you are not, Sibyl. What would Nan say to hear you say that?"

"Nan is far away enough. I wish she could hear me—us, I mean."

CHAPTER XXXIV. SIDNEY'S DISCOVERY.

THE next morning brought Austin a letter from his mother, and as he opened it he remembered that England or the delights of his new home had not much occupied him of late. However much his letters might describe the beauties of the Warren, his mind always slid back into meditation as to what Grace Evans might be doing. He knew her hours so well now; the times of the children going in and out; when Sibyl sallied forth to her teaching, and when she returned, and when both started for their daily walk. It was such a simple, homely existence; a life of patient toil, not brightened apparently by any one who cared for these young creatures. The more he thought of them the more he felt convinced that there must be some mystery or some sad misfortune attached to them. He inclined to the idea that misfortune was the real cause of their lonely lives, for Grace's calm, beautiful face did not suit much with the suggestion of mystery. There could be nothing wrong to hide when she could look at him as she did. This morning his mother's letter made him speculate still more, but not very agreeably.

"DEAREST AUSTIN,—We are all wishing so much you were at home. It does seem tiresome for you to be saddled with that young man just when you might be taking the girls out to garden parties. They are all well and happy. Beatrice is the only one who does not care about society; she is so taken up with writing daily to Colin—almost too much as I tell her. She will have plenty of time to talk to him when she is married. I warned him I did not wish the wedding to take place immediately, so that Bee might see more of the world. He assented, but not very willingly. He is a good fellow, but decidedly a little tedious to talk to. We are gradually replacing the old furniture by something more cheerful and less antiquated. I have taken poor James Gordon's room for my own; but I have turned out all the former furniture except a very massive bureau with an infinite number of small drawers and queer secret hiding-places. However, now it is empty, as I made the lawyer examine

all the old papers and burn the contents. Your letters lately have been very short; you do not tell me if you have made any acquaintances besides the Professor. Don't forget to do so next time. Minnie received a letter from that poor curate at Longham, the other day. Actually it was a proposal. It was rather ridiculous of him, considering he has such small prospects; and Minnie would never think of marrying a poor man. Poor child, she knows too well what poverty means. His excuse is, I suppose, that he is very much in love with her. The camp is only a few miles distant, so we have a few officers most days here. They like to dawdle away a pleasant hour or two. Really, army men are so very agreeable and easy to get on with. I wish you would turn your mind towards going into the army. You are so clever; the examinations would be nothing. But I mean to leave you free. Write soon and tell me how you and your young man employ your hours of leisure. I conclude it is not all study. Your loving mother,

"ELLEN GORDON."

Austin read this letter twice. It was a chatty note with nothing much in it, and yet he felt rather guilty whilst reading his mother's request to mention his acquaintances. Of course she had no motive; but he felt he had purposely said nothing about Grace and Sibyl. His mother would not understand, and he did not wish Grace's name to be talked of lightly by his sisters.

Next he could not help feeling very sorry for the curate; he knew and liked him, and honestly wished he had not had the pain of being refused by Minnie. Still, Minnie was as unsuitable a wife as he could well have hit upon; only suitability, unfortunately, is the last thing a man thinks of when he falls in love. Further, Austin read between the lines, and knew well that "the sprinkling of officers" was much more to Minnie's taste, and that doubtless she was now flirting with one or more of them, having already forgotten that she had encouraged the curate when no one better was at hand. Now that Austin was himself in love, and that in all earnestness, he thought much more seriously about the subject. How could he bear it if Grace encouraged him and then threw him over? Only such conduct was an impossibility with her, so he said to himself:

"She is true—quite true, and at present, except those few words about friendship,

she certainly has given me no encouragement."

And there was only a month! Would she find out before that time that he loved her? Would her own heart respond ever so little to that love? Austin could not answer this question—how he wished he could!

"But if she did, nothing on earth shall part us; twenty heiresses would not change my mind."

The rashness of youth and first love is proverbial, and yet Austin little dreamt that causes did exist which might make Fate laugh his vow to scorn, and scatter his hopes to the wind.

However, the morning could not be spent in thinking of Grace, and Austin was not the man to shirk duty. Whatever happened, Sidney must have his best attention; if the latter discovered his secret, and found him less sympathetic or cordial than usual, he might weary of his voluntary exile, and then all the evil tendencies might return, seven times more powerful on account of their temporary absence. So outwardly Austin hid his feelings, though he had to keep his ideas very much in check. The very thought of Grace sent a thrill through him which no name had ever before made him experience. But yet her name also called forth his highest aspirations. Grace herself, so good, so pure, so beautiful, was no common embodiment of a man's love. She was something infinitely higher than this; she was to him as a precious gift of God, and a personification of heaven.

It must be owned that Sidney in no way harmonised with these higher flights of imaginative love. To-day, for instance, he had got hold of a French book, in which was quoted a dialogue of Saint Evremont between Death and an old man who is praying him to spare the life of Madame de Mazarin. Death will save the lady if he can find a substitute; but no one except the aged pleader is found willing to take her place. Death somewhat pathetically asks:

N'est-il plus de ces belles âmes
Qui voudraient mourir pour leurs dames?

To which the old man answers decidedly:

Il n'est plus d'amants à ce prix,
Ni dans Londres ni dans Paris.

"A charming simplicity and truthfulness, don't you think, Gordon? What about its truth? Certainly if I look at home, I can't fancy myself dying for any one."

Gordon secretly agreed about Sidney's noncapability.

"I must say I don't agree with the old man; I think I know many who would do so."

"Many! Excuse me. Name."

"Given the object, I would," said Gordon, decidedly, knowing that for him the object was already given.

"Well, mentor, you never were like others; but still, may I be allowed the liberty of the doubt?"

"Certainly. By the way, it is this self-sacrifice for some one else that makes Bret Harte's stories so popular, and if this action were so rare and extraordinary, the public would not receive him with so much favour."

"I think it is just the contrary; the public claps at what it could not do itself. Talking of ladies, however, I do believe, mentor, that that pretty Sibyl is——"

"I dislike that habit of calling girls by their Christian names behind their backs when one does not know them well enough to do so to their face," interrupted Gordon, quietly.

"Well, then, Miss Sibyl Evans, the Beauty, anything you like; I believe she is getting up a flirtation with that German Count."

"Sidney! what are you talking about; What nonsense! Besides, it is hardly gentlemanly to pry into our neighbours' affairs."

"Upon my word, I am guiltless of prying. A fellow isn't to blame, is he, if a girl suddenly drags him away by main force when she sees another fellow looking at her?"

"What? Where? Besides, how do you know it was a German Count?"

"Three questions! It isn't a German Count but the German Count, the one who lives opposite, whose features I now and then scan as I smoke my evening cigar. I won't swear to it, of course, but I am pretty sure it was that fellow we were about to meet at the theatre last night."

Austin suddenly remembered the slight bow he had seen Sibyl bestow, and his mind also misgave him. Everything that would touch Grace must be of consequence to him; but he was enough master of himself to hide his feelings.

"I hope you are mistaken, Sidney."

"Well, honestly, I hope I am, for the little girl is pretty enough to despise that man. I believe him to be an awful scamp, and I have heard nothing to his credit,

for I privately asked the wise Professorin about him the other day."

"And what did she say?"

"Oh, that he was of very high family, and all that sort of thing; but that people did not speak much good of him. Besides, if you won't call it prying, I must tell you that I met him the other day at the corner of the Platz, and that I could be nearly sure that I saw Miss Sibyl disappearing round the corner."

"Nearly sure isn't enough to make it a certainty. I am sure her sister knows nothing about it."

"Miss Evans! No, I should fancy not, indeed! But the two are very different. I expect she is not capable of keeping the young one in hand."

"It may be all moonshine," returned Austin, and then he dropped the subject. He did not think so, however, and felt inwardly much disturbed, though he smiled at himself at the bare idea of his keeping an eye on any young lady's doings. Still, he meant indirectly to try and find out, if there were time, or else to give Grace some hint about the unadvisability of Sibyl's walking out alone. Then he again meditated that Grace might be angry and think him unpardonably meddlesome. Sibyl was the one creature she certainly did love. No one could be five minutes in the company of the sisters without finding this out. Anyhow, he would keep his eyes open, and he would not let selfish fears of offending Grace prevent him from saving her from great pain—that is, if he could help it. Yet even now he was inclined to treat the whole affair as an invention of Sidney's brains, though that young man did not often err on the side of imagination.

The weather had now become very hot. Unterberg felt oppressive, and one's only wish was to climb the hills which hung almost over the town, and thus to get into higher regions; but the exertion needed for this seemed almost too much. Sidney preferred lounging in the shady public gardens to using his legs to get out of the hot town.

A week passed, and Austin saw but little of the sisters. Grace had taken fright at the pleasures of society, and had given herself up to her indoor occupations; only Sibyl fluttered in and out to her daily teaching; and in the evening the two went into the nearest garden and sat down with their work or their books. Austin managed to find himself there too, sometimes; but he was so much afraid of intruding or

making Grace afraid of his presence, that he only allowed himself the pleasure of a few minutes' talk with her, sometimes only just a look and a bow as he passed the bench the sisters sat on. Sometimes he settled he would go and tell her right out that, in spite of himself, he loved her, and that she must love him; but the next moment he laughed the idea to scorn. He could almost see Grace gaze at him with her kind, gentle look turned into one of scorn or dislike; he could almost hear her ask him what right he had to speak so to her.

One evening, when half July had fled as if on wings, the Professorin suddenly gained his affection by saying:

"This is just the weather for a picnic in our wood. The Professor always goes once a year into the Waldeck woods. He says he likes communing with nature in silent rhapsodies." The Professorin, nodding towards her husband, said this in a most matter-of-fact way, as if it were an annual draught of rhapsody her husband imbibed, which was a regular duty that had to be performed.

"Yes," he said, "Nature is a divine mistress; but you should not see too much of her. The ancients made her subordinate to philosophy. We have erred in exalting her too much."

"I cannot agree with you," said Austin, quietly. "If you knew our poet Wordsworth well, you would find that Nature led him upwards to science, and to all that was grand and noble, and even to happiness."

"Goethe could find happiness without the help of Nature," said the Professor. "Did he not say, 'Love, charity, and science can alone make us happy and tranquil in this world of ours'?"

"Well, I rather agree with the ancients," put in Sidney. "There is a great deal too much twaddle written nowadays about birds, and flowers, and winds, and waves. The old fellows at all events did not wear out metaphors."

"A pagan suckled in a creed outworn," murmured Austin, quoting in spite of himself.

The Professor had not quite caught the meaning of these last remarks; but he looked at Sidney approvingly.

"Yes, Mister Chones, you are right. Does not the great master say: 'Twaddle is not simple nonsense, it may be sense in the wrong place'?"

"But about the picnic?" said the Professorin, with her usual passive expression

of countenance. She could understand a day in the woods better than her husband's philosophy, and cakes and provisions appealed to her soul.

"Certainly I should like nothing better," said Austin, who had already made out his own programme.

Sidney said it was too hot to take so much trouble; but the Professor replied that the heat was favourable to country recreation. One could dream without fearing to catch cold. He had a rooted objection to draughts, and wore cotton wool in his ears till the cold winds were no longer expected. In many little ways his philosophy broke down entirely; but of course one cannot always ensure that a big brain shall have a suitable earthly habitation. The Professor, however, agreed with the poet; he felt that he was even greater than he knew himself to be.

"Then, Ludwig, we must ask all our friends," said his wife. "And we will have many carriages; it looks well."

"By this I see solitude is not necessary for deep thought, Herr Professor," said Sidney.

"I can retire whenever I will," said the philosopher, of course tapping his forehead.

"Solitude for a day in the woods! Himmel! Herr Chones, that would, indeed, be a dull day," exclaimed the Professorin, lifting her hands.

"I am quite of your opinion, honoured Professorin. I say, the more the merrier. May we include Frau Hanson, Gretchen, and the English ladies?"

"Certainly, and any other of your friends."

But the "Choneses" had no other friends, and wished for no other Unterbergers.

"What day shall we choose, Ludwig?" asked the Professorin, turning towards her husband, who, strange to say, had many ideas about lucky days.

"Not a Friday, little wife; that is a day unsuited for happiness and meditation with Nature. Nor a Saturday. I have no objection to Thursday, or, shall we say Sunday next?"

Austin begged for Thursday, as he fancied Grace might have an objection to Sunday, at which the Professor shrugged his shoulders and smiled contemptuously.

"THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY."

MAGIC BY REFLECTION.

THERE is an old superstition, current, probably, in all parts of the country, that

the breaking of a mirror will be followed by bad luck—usually a death in the family. This is, doubtless, the survival of a still older superstition—the belief in certain magic qualities of the mirror, which made it able in certain circumstances to reflect the distant and to forecast the future. Nor was this superstition so childish as were some other popular delusions of old, for it had a certain philosophic basis. It is the peculiar property of the mirror to represent truth; to reproduce faithfully that which is; to show us ourselves as others see us.

The mirror has from time immemorial been a favourite charm for the exorcism of devils, and, indeed, to this day some of the African tribes believe that the best defence they have against their extremely ugly devil is—a mirror. If they keep one at hand, the devil must see himself in it before he can touch them, and be so terrified at his own ugliness that he will turn tail and flee.

We may take this as symbolical—that a man shrinks from his worst self when it is revealed to him; but the untutored mind is prone to mistake symbol for fact. In this way, while the ancient philosophers may have used the mirror as a symbol of the higher nature of man, so polished and clarified that it showed him his lower nature in all its deformity—the crowd came to regard the glass as an actual instrument of divination.

Some of the oldest romances in the world have to do with the magical operation of the mirror. In the "Gesta Romanorum" there is the story of a knight who went to Palestine, and who while there was shown by an Eastern magician in a mirror what was going on at home. In the "Arabian Nights" the story of Prince Ahmed gives a variant, an ivory tube through which could be discovered the far distant—a sort of anticipation of Sam Weller's "double million magnifying gas microscope of hextra power."

In the story of Prince Zeyn Alasnam, the enchanted mirror was able to reflect character, and was called the "Touchstone of Virtue." Here we have Hamlet's idea of holding the mirror up to Nature. The young King, Zeyn Alasnam, had eight beautiful statues of priceless value, and he wanted a ninth to make up his set. The difficulty was to find one beautiful enough; but the Prince of Spirits promised to supply one as soon as Zeyn should bring him a maiden, at least fifteen years old,

and of perfect beauty; but the maiden must not be vain of her charms, and she must never have told an untruth. Zeyn employed his magic mirror, but for a long time without success, as it always became blurred when he looked into it in the presence of a girl. At last he found one whose image was faithfully and brilliantly reflected—whose modesty and truthfulness were attested by the mirror. He took her with reluctance to the Prince of Spirits, because he had fallen in love with her himself; but his faithfulness to the contract was duly rewarded. On returning home he found that the ninth statue, placed on its pedestal by the Prince of Spirits according to promise, was no cold marble, but the peerless and virtuous maiden whom he had discovered by means of his mirror.

Paracelsus, in one of his treatises on Magic, gives the following account of the uses to which "the witches and evil spirits" sometimes put the mirror.

"They take a mirror set in a wooden frame and put it into a tub of water, so that it will swim on the top with its face directed towards the sky. On the top of the mirror, and encircling the glass, they lay a cloth saturated with blood, and thus they expose it to the influence of the moon; and this evil influence is thrown towards the moon, and radiating again from the moon it may bring evil to those who love to look at the moon. The rays of the moon, passing through that ring upon the mirror, become poisoned, and poison the mirror; the mirror throws back the poisoned ether into the atmosphere, and the moon and the mirror poison each other in the same manner as two malicious persons, by looking at each other, poison each other's souls with their eyes. If a mirror is strongly poisoned in this manner, the witch takes good care of it; and if she desires to injure some one, she takes a waxen image made in his name, she surrounds it with a cloth spotted with blood, and throws the reflex of the mirror through the opening in the middle upon the head of the figure, or upon some other part of its body, using at the same time her evil imagination and curses; and the man whom the image represents may then have his vitality dried up, and his blood poisoned by that evil influence, and he may become diseased and his body covered with boils."

This, of course, is not divination, but sorcery.

Paracelsus gives very minute directions for the making of a magic mirror. The material should be the "electrum magicum," which is a compound of ten parts of pure gold, ten of silver, five of copper, two of tin, two of lead, one part of powdered iron, and five parts of mercury. When the planets Saturn and Mercury conjoin, the lead has to be melted and the mercury added. Then the metal must cool, while you wait for a conjunction of Jupiter with Saturn and Mercury; when that occurs, you melt the amalgam of lead and mercury, and add the tin, previously melted in a separate crucible, at the exact moment of conjunction. Again you wait for a conjunction of either of the above-named planets with the Sun, when you add the gold; with the Moon, when you add the silver; with Venus, when you add the copper. Finally, when a conjunction of either of the planets occurs with Mars, you must complete your mixture with the powdered iron, and stir up the whole molten mass with a dry rod of witch-hazel.

Thus far your metal; but the mirror is not made yet. It must be of about two inches diameter, and has to be founded in moulds of fine sand at the moment when a conjunction of Jupiter and Venus occurs. The mirror must be smoothed with a grindstone and polished with tripoly and a piece of lime-wood; but all the operations must be conducted only when the planetary influences are favourable.

By selecting the proper hours, three different mirrors may be prepared, and then, at a time of conjunction of two "good" planets, while the sun or moon "stands on the house of the lord of the hour of your birth," the three mirrors are to be placed in pure well-water and left for an hour. After this they may be wrapped in clean linen and kept ready for use.

With a mirror made in this way from the "electrum magicum," Paracelsus says:

"You may see the events of the past and the present, absent friends or enemies, and see what they are doing. You may see in it any object you may desire to see, and all the doings of men in daytime or at night. You may see in it anything that has been ever written down, said, or spoken in the past, and also see the person who said it, and the causes that made him say what he did, and you may see in it anything, however secret it may have been kept."

The plastic and creative power of the mind is the power of imagination; but the power of imagination is, or should be, con-

trolled by the will. It is not alone the mediæval dabblers in the occult who have adopted, or endeavoured to adopt, various means for subduing the will and making the imagination passive.

The ancient pythoness, as Dr. Franz Hartmann, the modern German exponent of the science of magic, points out, attempted to heighten her receptivity by the inhalation of noxious vapours; uncivilised peoples use poison, or the maddening whirl of the dance; others use opium, Indian hemp, or other narcotics—all for the same purpose, to suspend the will, render the mind a blank, and excite the brain so as to produce morbid fancies and illusions. The fortune-teller and the clairvoyant employ methods of their own for concentrating their attention so as to produce a condition of mental passivity. The Indian adept prides himself on being able to extract volition and suspend imagination by the mere exercise of will.

A favourite device to bring about mental passivity has always been by staring at mirrors, or crystal, or sheets of water, or even pools of ink.

"There are numerous prescriptions for the preparation of magic mirrors," says Dr. Hartmann in his work on "Magic," "but the best magic mirror will be useless to him who is not able to see clairvoyantly, while the natural clairvoyant may call that faculty into action by concentrating his mind on any particular spot, a glass of water, ink, a crystal, or anything else. For it is not in the mirror where such things are seen, but in the mind; the mirror merely serves to assist in the entering of that mental state which is necessary to produce clairvoyant sight. The best of all mirrors is the soul of man, and it should be always kept pure, and be protected against dust, and dampness, and rust, so that it may not become tarnished, and remain perfectly clear, and able to reflect the light of the divine spirit in its original purity."

A German writer of the fifteenth century takes a less favourable view of what he calls pyromancy, although pyromancy is really divination by fire. He reports the practices of certain Masters of Magic, who make children look into a wretched mirror for the purpose of obtaining information in an unholy manner. "Young boys are said to behold future things and all things, in a crystal. Base, desperate, and faint-hearted Christians practise it, to whom the shadow and the phantom of the devil are dearer than

the truth of God. Some take a clear and beautifully polished crystal or beryl, which they consecrate and keep clean, and treat with incense, myrrh, and the like. And when they propose to practise their art, they wait for a clear day, or select some clean chamber in which are many candles burning. The Masters then bathe, and take the pure child into the room with them, and clothe themselves in pure white garments, and sit down and speak in magic sentences, and then burn their magic offering, and make the boy look into the stone, and whisper in his ears secret words which have, as they think, some holy import, but which are verily words of the devil."

A sixteenth century German tells of a man at Elbingen, in Prussia, who "predicted hidden truths" by means of a mirror, and sold the knowledge to his customers. Many crystal-seeing old hags are referred to as being upon terms of intimacy with Black Kaspar. Indeed, in German literature, both historical, philosophical, legendary, and romantic, we find endless references to the magic mirror and the divining crystal.

Modern romancists still find dramatic use for the old superstitions. Quite recently a novel of the present day centred its interest upon an ancient mirror, which exchanged its reflection for the person of him who gazed into it—a practical and startling realisation of the idea that the glass reveals one's true self. Then, not to multiply incidents, Wilkie Collins, in "The Moonstone," introduces what Mr. Rudyard Kipling in another story calls the "ink-pool"; and readers of Dante Gabriel Rossetti will recall to mind doings of the Spirits of the Beryl.

In a large number of stories, the magic mirror is not a looking-glass at all. But the beryl, the ink-pool, Dr. Dee's famous spherical speculum, the rock crystal, or even a glass of water, may all, according to the adepts, have the same properties as Vulcan's mirror, in which Penelope, the wife of Ulysses, beheld a vision of all the wonder and grandeur of Queen Elizabeth's court which was to be. Even a polished sword-blade has been asserted to have made an effective magic mirror, and it is recorded that Jacob Boehme penetrated into the innermost secrets of nature and the hearts of men by means of a tin cup.

As to cups, the Septuagint gives one to understand that the cup placed by Joseph in the sack of Benjamin in Egypt was

not an ordinary drinking-vessel, but a divining-cup. Now the way of divining with a cup was to fill it with pure water, and to read the images which were then reflected.

Cambuscan's mirror was, according to Chaucer, of Oriental origin. It was given by the King of Tartary to the King of Araby, and it seemed to possess all the virtues of several kinds of magic mirrors. Thus it showed whether love was returned, whether an individual confronted with it were friend or foe, and what trouble was in store for those who consulted it. Merlin's mirror, called Venus's looking-glass, had some of these properties, but was made in Wales, and was given by Merlin to King Ryence. It revealed what was being done by friend or foe at a distance, and it also enabled the fair Britomart to read the features, and also the name, of her future husband.

The consultation of a pool, on certain special occasions, for the lineaments of "the coming man," has been a common enough practice with love-sick damsels in much more recent times.

The wonderful looking-glass of Lao, described by Lien Chi Altangi in Goldsmith's "Citizen of the World," reflected the mind as well as the body, and the Emperor Chusi used to make his ladies dress both their heads and their hearts before it every morning. Great, however, as are the Chinese in divination, and numerous as are their superstitions, we do not find, pace Oliver Goldsmith, that the mirror occupies any prominent place in their magic.

One of the most famous dealers in catoptromancy (divination by mirror) in this country was Dr. John Dee, who flourished about the middle of the sixteenth century. He had a speculum called the Shew Stone, and sometimes the Holy Stone, with which he divined by the aid of a medium named Kelly. This Kelly was a notoriously bad character, so his example does not carry out the idea that the seer must be a stainless child, or some absolutely pure-minded being. Dr. Dee professed to have a number of regular spirit-visitors, whom he described with much circumstantial minuteness, and thus his mirror-magic seems to have possessed more of the character of spiritualistic manifestations than of the usual Oriental crystallo-mancy.

The famous Cagliostro—Prince of Scoundrels, as Carlyle called him—used

a bottle of pure water, into which he directed a child to gaze, with results which were not always satisfactory.

The Orientalist, Lane, published some fifty years ago, or more, a circumstantial narrative of an experience he had with an Egyptian magician, along with a Mr. Salt, the British Consul. Invocations were liberally used, in order to summon the two genii of the magician, and verses were recited from the Koran, in order that the eyes of the medium—a boy—should be opened in a supernatural manner. The magician selected one at random from a group of boys, and drew in the palm of the boy's right hand a magic square inscribed with Arabic figures. He then poured ink into the centre, and told the boy to gaze fixedly, while he himself proceeded to drop more written invocations, on slips of paper, into a chafing-dish. For some time the boy saw nothing but the reflection of the magician, and then began to describe various scenes. At last Lane asked that Lord Nelson should be called up, and the boy said that he saw a man in dark blue clothes, with his left arm across his breast. It was explained that the boy saw things as in a mirror, and that Nelson's empty right sleeve worn across the breast naturally appeared in the glass as the left arm. Now the boy may have heard of Nelson, but could scarcely have seen him, while the figure of so famous a man must have been familiar to the magician. Hypnotism has, therefore, been suggested as the explanation of what Lane witnessed, which seemed so miraculous at the time.

Many scholars, philosophers, and scientific students of mediæval times, who had no pretence to magic, had yet firm faith in the power of mirrors, constructed in a special manner and under auspicious planetary influences, to reveal both the distant present, and the future. One of the latest adepts on record was a French magician who foretold by his mirror the death of a Prince, and the regency of the Duc d'Orléans. There are many published prescriptions for the making of a magic mirror, but that which we have given from Paracelsus is a fair specimen of the ultra-scientific method. Among directions for the use of the crystal may be cited those of Barth:

"When a crystal has been ground and polished, it is dedicated to some spirit or other; this is called its consecration. Before being used, it is charged—that is,

an invocation is made to the spirit, wherein a vision is requested of the things that one wishes to experience. Ordinarily, a young person is chosen to look into the glass and behold the prayed for vision. After a little time the crystal becomes enveloped in a cloud, and a tiny vision appears which represents in miniature the persons, scenes, and things that are necessary to supply the required information. When the information has been obtained the crystal is discharged, and after receiving thanks for the services he has performed, the spirit is dismissed."

In modern crystal-gazing and mirror-reading, however, there is no invocation. An American spiritualist says that he once put a crystal into the hands of a lady who knew nothing about its reputed virtues, but who straightway began to describe a scene which she saw in it, and which turned out afterwards to be a simultaneous incident at Trebizond. The mediumistic influence of the spirit of a North American Indian may not commend the story to non-spiritualists. The experiences of the Countess Wurmbrand, as related in her curious book, "*Visionen im Wasserglass*," are more matter-of-fact, perhaps, but were also assisted by a mysterious spirit, who enabled her to read pictures in the glass and to dictate them to her husband. She was more successful ten years ago than more recent experimenters and psychologists of her own country have been since.

The Society for Psychical Research have given much attention to the subject, and have reported some remarkable observations—especially those of a Miss Goodrich, of London, a lady who has made several scores of experiments of her own in crystal-reading, always taking notes immediately. She tried the back of a watch, a glass of water, a mirror, and other reflecting surfaces, before arriving at the conclusion that polished rock-crystal affords the best speculum for divination.

Having reached this point, the lady draped her selected crystal in black, set it where no surrounding objects could be reflected in it, and sought it when in search of light and leading. Sometimes her consultations were very practical. Thus, one finds among her notes:

"I had carelessly destroyed a letter without preserving the address of my correspondent. I knew the county, and searching a map recognised the name of the town, one unfamiliar to me, but which I was sure I should know when I saw it.

But I had no clue to the name of the house or street, till at last it struck me to test the value of the crystal as a means of recalling forgotten knowledge. A very short inspection supplied me with 'Hibbs House,' in grey letters on a white ground, and having nothing better to suggest from any other source, I risked posting my letter to the address so strangely supplied. A day or two brought an answer headed 'Hibbs House' in grey letters on a white ground."

Let us take an example of another of Miss Goodrich's crystal-readings, and let it be remembered that they are all reported experiments of our own day.

"One of my earliest experiences was of a picture, perplexing and wholly unexpected—a quaint oak chair, an old hand, a worn black coat-sleeve resting on the arm of the chair—slowly recognised as a recollection of a room in a country vicarage which I had not entered, and but seldom recalled, since I was a child of ten. But whence came this vision—what association has conjured up this picture? What have I done to-day? At length the clue is found. I have to-day been reading Dante, first enjoyed with the help of our dear old vicar many a year ago."

And again:

"I happened to want the date of Ptolemy Philadelphus, which I could not recall, though feeling sure that I knew it, and that I associated it with some event of importance. When looking in the crystal some hours later, I found a picture of an old man with long, white hair and beard, dressed like a Lyceum Shylock, and busy writing in a large book with tarnished massive clasps. I wondered much who he was, and what he could possibly be doing, and thought it a good opportunity of carrying out a suggestion which had been made to me of examining objects in the crystal with a magnifying glass. The glass revealed to me that my old gentleman was writing in Greek, though the lines faded away as I looked, all but the characters he had last traced, the Latin numerals LXX. Then it flashed into my mind that he was one of the Jewish Elders at work on the Septuagint, and that this date, 277 B.C., would serve equally well for Ptolemy Philadelphus! It may be worth while to add, though the fact was not in my conscious memory at the moment, that I had once learnt a chronology on a mnemonic system which substituted letters for figures, and the 'memoria technica' for this date was

'Now Jewish Elders indite a Greek copy.'

The reader will doubtless find a simple and easy explanation of Miss Goodrich's mirror-reading in unconscious cerebration. The crystal simply assisted her memory and recalled incidents and scenes, just as a chance odour, a bar of music, a word, a look, a name, will often do for most of us. Clearly there is nothing either magic or spiritualistic in this latest example of the magic mirror. There are, however, some other experiments recorded which seem to be only explainable on a theory of telepathy; but Mr. Max Dessoir, commenting on the evidence of Miss Goodrich in an American learned review, seems to attribute the whole phenomena merely to "revived memory." This is all very well as to past events, but what shall we say to a case such as this among Miss Goodrich's experiments?

"In January last I saw in the crystal the figure of a man crouching at a small window, and looking into the room from the outside. I could not see his features, which appeared to be muffled, but the crystal was particularly dark that evening, and as the picture was an unpleasant one, I did not persevere. I concluded the vision to be a result of a discussion in my presence of the many stories of burglary with which the newspapers had lately abounded, and reflected with a passing satisfaction that the only windows in the house divided into four panes, as were those of the crystal picture, were in the front attic and almost inaccessible. Three days later a fire broke out in that very room, which had to be entered from outside through the window, the face of the fireman being covered with a wet cloth as a protection from the smoke, which rendered access through the door impossible."

Was this coincidence or prevision, or what Mr. Dessoir calls the "falsification of memory?" The thing was either miracle, which we are hardly prepared to accept, or the after-confusion of a vague foreboding with an actual occurrence in the mind of the observer. Mr. Dessoir suggests another explanation of crystal pictures in the doctrine of the double consciousness of the human soul; but that is a subject too abstruse for the present article.

While we have shown that mirror and crystal-reading is one of the most ancient of occult practices, we have also seen that it is practised in our own country even at this day. Moreover, it is said that there

is in England a wholesale manufacture of magic mirrors as a regular industry, but as to the truth of this statement we cannot vouch.

JOHN LEECH.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

"VANITY of vanities, saith the Preacher, all is vanity. . . . Of making many books there is no end."

Well, if this was his opinion some three thousand years ago, what would the Preacher think now of the modern art of book-making? How would he characterise the vast number of new volumes manufactured every year, and especially the monstrous number of biographies?

Anybody nowadays who thinks himself a somebody conceives himself entitled to tell the world in general the story of his life, and to chronicle the small beer he has brewed in it since boyhood; or, supposing he should die without making in this way an attempt upon his life, then anybody who had known him, or had ever chanced to meet him, is considered to be qualified to edit his "remains," and publish all his private diaries and letters. The leaves of memoirs, and biographies, and lives, and reminiscences, are thus rained on us as thick as leaves in Vallombrosa; and there is constantly great blowing of little penny trumpets, and continually puffing through the organs of the publishers. "Story, God bless you, I have none to tell, sir!" might be quoted as a preface to most of these memorials; and their literary value might be esteemed as being similar to that of the backgammon boards labelled "Histories of England," which Elia has classified as "books which are not books."

The life of John Leech,* lately published, must regretfully be placed among these disappointing works. The subject is a good one, and deserves the best of treatment; but the treatment here bestowed on it demands another epithet, if it be fairly judged. Mr. Frith has done some good work in his time, and hardly can be pardoned on the score of inexperience for letting such poor patchwork slip out of his hands. It seems a pity to have dropped the palette for the pen, to put forth such a feeble "pot-boiler" as this. The success of the three volumes of his own

* "John Leech, his Life and Work." By William Powell Frith, R. A. In 2 vols. Bentley & Son.

chatty reminiscences appears to have encouraged him to write a couple more, and to make them up in the fashion of the former, trusting that the public would swallow the concoction, although it was not labelled "the mixture as before." So he has made as much as possible of the really very little that he knew about John Leech, and has added "quantum suff." of rather weak and watery matter by way of filling up.

To give some value to the volumes, they are enriched with some few out of Leech's many thousand charming drawings; and many pages are devoted, somewhat needlessly, perhaps, to describing their good points. The comments are worth little, but, coming as they do from a Royal Academician, the reader may be trusted to pay them due respect, though he may probably decline to read the bald abridgements of books by comic authors, which are added for his benefit by the care of Mr. Frith. The rest is leather and prunella—scraps of common small talk, and odds and ends of anecdote, which, however entertaining, are entirely out of place. Tales of how Her Majesty once made a little joke in the middle of a drawing lesson, or how Mr. Frith once at a dance was mistaken by his lovely partner for a tailor, may perhaps be thought amusing, but can hardly be deemed relevant to the life and work of John Leech. However, let us try to pick a few plums from the pudding, or it may be the padding, humbly hopeful that our readers may feel thankful for small mercies, like the clergy for collections chiefly made in threepenny bits.

John Leech was born upon the twenty-ninth of August, in the year 1817, and presumably within the hearing of Bow bells. His father lived on Ludgate Hill, at a place of "restoration" called the London Coffee House, where, although he had succeeded to his uncle in the management, he proved himself financially unable to succeed. At the early age of three, Master John, while sitting on his mother's knee, is reported by his family to have made a little drawing, which the sculptor Flaxman is said to have termed "wonderful." Very possibly it was so, in a certain sense, at least; but that there was any sign of "genius" displayed by it, Mr. Frith is doubtless justified in utter disbelief.

When only seven years old, the boy was sent to school at Charterhouse; a little

prematurely, as many tender-hearted mothers would admit. The school was then placed near to Smithfield, and was ruled by Dr. Russell, who, whatever his defects in teaching may have been, surely never spoilt a child by any sparing of the rod. The three Fs—flogging, fagging, and fighting—continually attended the pursuit of the three Rs and the culture of the classics, which in some degree ensued.

A boy by disposition tender and affectionate could hardly be expected to find pleasure in a bear-garden; and it is small wonder that in Master Johnny's letters are some piteously sad wailings of his home-sick little heart. The phrase, "I am very unhappy," is frequently repeated, and often forms the plaintive burden of his song. At times its pathos is enhanced by a prayer for speedy help in great pecuniary troubles, which compel a prompt petition for "half-a-crown by the porter," who elsewhere is more grandly entitled "my ambassador," to give due weight to the demand. In general, however, the suppliant assumes a far less tragic tone, merely begging for a cake or some such trifling creature comfort to solace his captivity. About a dozen of these letters are printed from the manuscripts in Mr. Frith's possession.

Schoolboys, as a rule, write mostly to their mothers, and generally indulge in much misspelling of their words. But it seems that Master John was an exception to the rule; for, of his eleven letters, ten begin "My dear Papa," and barring a few slips, such as "Wenesday" and "Essex," his orthography is such as few modern public schoolboys, or even more enlightened Girton girls, could beat.

To justify our praise of them we may append a couple, just to give our readers a relish for the rest. By the date it may be seen that the small writer was barely nine years old:

"Charter House October 2 1826.

"MY DEAR PAPA,—You told me to write to you when the reports were made out, they are made out now, and mine is, does his Best. I hope you are quite well, and Mamma the same. I hope Tom Mary Caroline, and Ester are quite well. I have not spoken to Mr. Chapman yet about the tuter, and drawing Master, because I had not an opportunity, send me a cake as soon as it is convenient Your affectionate son J. LEECH."

"DEAR PAPA,—As I am rather short of

money and want to keep my money I've got, I should be much obliged if you would give my ambassador 18 pence or so as I've promised a boy at school one of those small bladders to make balloons of, if you remember you bought me one once. I hope you are all well I remain Your affectionate son J. LEECH."

If only for its rarity, we add the only letter written to his mother :

"MY DEAR MAMMA,—I understand that you came to see me yesterday, and me being in the green, you did not see me, so that made me still more unhappy, I beg you will come and see me on Saturday for I am very unhappy. I want to see you or Papa very much indeed. Your affectionate son J. LEECH."

Poor unhappy little prisoner! How his mother must have wept on reading his petition! Of course, her darling must be wretched among all those rude boys, in whose rough games he then could hardly hope to join, his arm having been broken by a fall from his pony. How her kind heart must have ached when she thought about his misery; and how she must have sighed for Saturday to come, when she could bring him comfort—and probably a cake! It seems pretty clear, however, that his early sorrows ended long before he left; indeed, we learn from an old playfellow of his—towards the close of Volume II.—that "Leech was the most popular boy in the school, and the margins of his grammars were a delight to boyish eyes."

Thackeray, it is well known, was at Charterhouse with Leech; but it may be questioned if they ever were companions there, though fate threw them much together in the course of after-life. Says Mr. Frith anent their friendship, in the phrase of a good Christian, though scarce a good grammarian :

"Leech made no way at the Charterhouse; never approaching the position held by Thackeray, who was four years his senior; indeed, I doubt that they saw, or cared to see, much of each other, little dreaming that they would ultimately become dear and fast friends, till death separated them, only to meet again, as we believe, after the sad, short interval that elapsed between the deaths of each."

Four years' difference in age may seem a formidable barrier for school friends to climb over. But Mr. Frith affords no proof

that Thackeray in scholarship was unapproachable by Leech, or that the latter failed to make fair progress while at school. Certainly his letters give no evidence of this. "I am happy to say I am at the very top of the form," he proudly boasts to "dear papa," after anxiously expressing the comprehensive hope that "you and Mamma, Tom and Fanny are all well since I left you last night." In the same letter he says, "I would write to Polly now only I have not time"—a proof perhaps that he was pretty hard at work; but the affectionate little fellow somehow finds the time to add, "Pray give Polly a thousand kiss for me, and Fanny and Tom the same." Another of his letters to his father begins fondly, "I am very happy indeed to say that I am promoted, for I know it makes you happy," and certainly such words as, "very attentive," which occur in his "reports," do not confirm the statement that he "made no way" at school.

Mr. Frith, indeed, appears to have some hazy notion that boys on the foundation ranked higher than the rest. With his usual disregard of sequence in events, he suddenly harks back to Leech's school-days, while telling us some stories about his married life. In the ninth chapter of the second volume it occurs to him to mention that the boy was fond of drawing while at school; and of this to cite a witness who is happily still living, and who, about the year "Twenty-five, upon the presentation of Lord Grey, "entered as a Gown boy, thus taking and maintaining a higher position in the school than Leech ever succeeded in reaching." By the kindness of Earl Russell—the "little boy" who chalked "No Popery" in the famous Punch cartoon—the orphan son of John Leech was enrolled among the Gown boys; but he thereby never reached a higher place upon the school list than his father, who was not on the foundation, might have done.

After nine years passed at Charterhouse, John Leech went to St. Bartholomew's, where, under Mr. Stanley, the surgeon of the hospital, it is said that he worked hard, although no doubt the labour could hardly have been pleasant to him. His natural taste for drawing, however, found some vent, for he made some excellent "studies" of anatomy, which doubtless helped him greatly in his later work. Mr. Frith is doubtless amply justified in thinking that "from these studies may be traced much of the knowledge of the human form, and above all of proportion, always displayed

in his work ; for in those wonderful drawings of his, whether a figure is tall or short, fat or thin, whether he deals with a child or a giant, with a dog or a horse, no disproportion can be found."

How long the lad remained a student at the hospital is not precisely stated ; but "after a time," which is rather a vague phrase, he was placed, says Mr. Frith, with a certain Mr. Whittle, a singular preceptor, half doctor and half athlete, who, under the pseudonym of Rawkins, rather farcically figures among other funny persons in the life of Mr. Ledbury, from the pen of Albert Smith. Whittle seems a name provocative of merriment, and as its possessor was rather an odd fellow, paying more attention to his pigeons than his patients, his pupils might be pardoned for not doing serious work. Anyhow, it seems that Leech was allowed to whittle away but "a short time" with this queer teacher, being soon placed more judiciously in the care of Dr. Cockle, whose father's name has been made famous by his pills. The lad then seems to have attended lectures and to have worked with all due diligence ; but "his notes were garnished with sketches" of his fellow-students, and many of these drawings are extant still, and serve to show that "such a genuine artist" was not born to be a doctor, despite his being saddled with the ancient surname of a Leech.

Moreover, fate soon interfered to save him from the surgery and instal him in the studio, to which, by aptitude of nature, he clearly was inclined. The money troubles of the father put a stop to the supplies for medical tuition, and the son was thereby forced, perhaps not too unwillingly, to lay aside his science and betake himself to art. His first venture was a little book of lithographs, published in four quarto sheets and called "Etchings and Sketchings, by A. Pen, Esq., price two shillings plain, three shillings coloured." This first achievement saw the light when he was just eighteen, and in the following year, 1836, he produced "The Boy's Own Series," "Amateur Originals," "Studies from Nature," and "The Ups and Downs of Life." Where and how he managed to live at this very trying period, we are not precisely told ; but that his "struggle for bread for himself and others must have been terrible," we can easily conceive. Who the "others" were it is not difficult to guess ; nor is it surprising that, "excess of generosity" being his "greatest failing,"

these family embarrassments sorely burdened him through life.

His coming of age was not a very festive season, for, being tempted to accept an accommodation bill, "in order to meet difficulties" on the family account, he was arrested and clapped into a sponging-house in Newman Street. Here he remained about a fortnight, and, doubtless, stored his mind with many prudent resolutions, and stamped upon his memory some types of men in debt. To pay for his expenses he did some hasty lithographs and sold them for a guinea each to Spooner in the Strand. At last money was advanced "on a projected publication"—which, however, is not named—and this sum freed him from the sponging-house ; but the bill-discounting crew again soon had him in their clutches, and kept him lodged in Cursitor Street, though only for a few days. To give some notion of the service which he rendered to his family, and of the hard labour to which he was condemned, it is stated on good evidence that the sums which he supplied "were always heavy, the last of them being, I understand, a thousand pounds."

Doubtless, Mr. Frith is justified in saying that "Leech arrived at his supreme eminence without any art education." His schooling in this way was limited to some few drawing lessons while at Charterhouse, and to "some slight mechanical knowledge" acquired from Mr. Orrin Smith, a wood engraver, and likewise to a few hours spent in etching in the presence of George Cruikshank. Smith was clever at his work, but rather parsimonious and hard upon his pupil. Leech did not approve of being treated shabbily, and so, being asked one day to introduce some figures in a quiet churchyard scene—already drawn upon the wood, to illustrate some parson's serious little book—he embellished it with groups of children frolicking and fighting, in a fashion hardly suited to the grave theme of the work.

Clever as they were, Leech's early etchings failed to please the public taste ; and it was not till the year 1840 that he made a real hit. Then the famed Mulready envelope appeared, upon the introduction of the penny post ; and being too elaborate and pretentious in design, it afforded a fair subject for a caricature by Leech. Mr. Frith informs us, at rather needless length, how he, some seven years afterwards, was the means of introducing the young artist to the old one, who owned he had been

nettled, not by the caricature, but by the bottled leech at bottom. This, he thought, was meant to imitate his signature, and to show him as a "bloodsucker," one who lived by freely "bleeding" the buyers of his work.

The remainder of this chapter, which is headed, "Meeting of Mulready and Leech," is filled with an odd jumble of Mr. Frith's recollections, and with fragments of his small talk about the sadness of Liston, and the madness of Gillray, and the suicide of Seymour, and the success of "Pickwick," and other matters unconnected with the title of his book. This fourth chapter may be not unfairly cited as a sample of the rest. Mr. Frith pays little heed to sequence in chronology, and, indeed, seems to delight in mixing up his dates. It is a pity that he takes no pains to sort his cards, for it cannot be denied that he has held a lot of trumps. He jumbles all his facts and fancies, his sentiments and stories, in such haphazard confusion, that to sift them is as difficult as to sort the shingle on the beach. To show how Leech progressed in his artistic power and skill, it would surely have been easy to give specimens of his early and then his later work. Here, however, all the gems are jumbled like the bits in a kaleidoscope; and the drawings in a lottery are not more mixed than those which here lie scattered through the book.

For instance, in the first volume, "Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour" is rather lengthily condensed; while in the second volume a couple of chapters are devoted to other "Sporting Novels," and a chapter of fifteen pages, giving needless extracts from the "Bon Gaultier Ballads," is sandwiched rather clumsily in between the two. Even the "Punch" drawings are similarly treated, some being in the first and some in the second volume, which begins rather absurdly with the birth of Mr. Punch. Mr. Frith grotesquely poses as a perfect ignoramus, and craves forgiveness for his "shortcomings and irregularities," on the ground of "inexperience and ignorance of the laws of literary composition." But this hardly can excuse him for omission of an index, or for his sudden jumps and jumble in sequence of events. We really feel inclined to echo for his benefit the rebuke of the good-natured critic in the gallery:

"Look here, Mr. Manager, we don't expect much talent, but you might just jine your scenes!"

In the year 1840, which produced his famous envelope, John Leech made his début in Bentley's famous "Miscellany." Here are to be found some of his drawings for the "Comic English Grammar," which, like its Latin predecessor, was written by his old friend, Percival Leigh, and not by Gilbert & Beckett, as Mr. Frith supposes. Several of Leech's drawings appear in the next volume, including one—that of "The Old Woman clothed in Grey"—to illustrate a tale in the "Ingoldsby Legends;" and a couple of Chinese subjects, which, for fun as well as "finish," were well worthy of regard. In the tenth volume, published also in 1841, he began a series for "Richard Savage," a tale by Charles Whitehead, now doubtless little known. Many of these drawings may be held to rival those he made some two years later for "The Fortunes of the Scattergood Family," a story by Albert Smith, which Mr. Frith omits to notice, and even those which followed in "The Marchioness of Brinvilliers," a fine blood-and-thunder work by the same writer, which first saw the light in 1845. This somewhat loathsome novel Mr. Frith accords himself the lengthy task to summarise, in the hope that his "short extracts," covering some two dozen pages, may enable his readers "to understand and enjoy" the specimens appended of the drawings in the book, which, but for them, might long since have been swept into space.

AN OLD SITE RENEWED.

WHEN, a short time ago, the representatives of American dramatic art combined with English members of "the profession" to celebrate the foundation of a new theatre at the corner of Leicester Square, the dingy, half-demolished dwellings which looked down upon the scene suggested the crowded courts and alleys which were recently characteristic of the site, but which are now rapidly disappearing, while new London is slowly rising from their ruins. It will be for the twentieth century to appreciate all these changes—we of the nineteenth have to put up with the hoardings, the scaffoldings, and the wide entrenchments, and also to pay the piper for the tunes to which our successors may merrily dance.

Yet that there is still a considerable population of people not overburdened with wealth, is evident from the little throng in

the enclosure of Leicester Square. It is a famous resort for the children of the neighbourhood, who throng the benches between school hours in little groups of three or four, taking care of each other, without the aid of nursemaids or "prams." A few weary old men, worn and shabby, lonely in the crowd, sit there and sun themselves—when there is any sun, that is—for when rain sweeps across, or a chilly fog, the place is as bleak as a mountain-side. This enclosure is the last remaining bit of Leicester Fields, the retired scene of many a duel and bloody fray in former days, and these fields stretched across from St. Martin's to Hedge Lane, now Whitecomb Street, and were open pasture in the reign of Elizabeth, where horses and cows ranged at will.

In these fields, which ran down as far as the Mews, now represented by the National Gallery and part of Trafalgar Square, Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester, of the Penshurst family, laid the foundations of a mansion in the year 1632. The Earl had probably inherited his rights over the fields from his great uncle, Robert Dudley, the noted Earl of Leicester of Queen Elizabeth's time. To the connection between the Dudleys and these fields there is a curious piece of evidence in the existence of a public-house at the corner of the new Charing Cross Avenue and Bear Street, which bears the sign of the Bear and Staff, which was, in fact, the cognisance of the Dudleys, as it had been earlier of the Nevilles; but it does not appear that the Sidneys ever made use of the emblem.

The new mansion was built on the plan, customary at the time, of a quadrangle open to the south, and surrounded with gardens of considerable extent. Lord Leicester was in some favour at the Court of King Charles the First, and often employed in embassies and ceremonial functions; and during his absence his wife, a daughter of the Earl of Northumberland, is found often enough at Leicester House writing long letters to her husband abroad, and busy about the affairs of her sons and daughters. Yet the Earl was but a lukewarm Royalist, and in the troubles of the civil wars kept himself as much as possible out of the fray, and escaped fairly well from fines and sequestrations during the Commonwealth. Nor did he show much of the courtier at the Restoration, but following the country life that he loved, at his beautiful seat at Penshurst,

he let his big mansion in the Fields to sundry great people. Ambassadors would be quartered there, and foreign guests of distinction; and in 1662 he was asked by the King to let the house to the King's aunt, Elizabeth, the titular Queen of Bohemia, always poor, and now getting old and shaky. The Earl consents very civilly, "thinking it a pretty pleasant place," and hopes that the air of the house may contribute to Her Majesty's recovery. The poor Queen's one and only friend, Lord Craven, soon writes to ask for more rooms for the Queen's suite, which are at present crowded up with Lord Leicester's belongings. The Earl is again complaisant, writing to the effect that he did not think his garrets would be grand enough for the Royal attendants, and describing his mansion as that little house "not built for a levée but only for a private family." However, the Queen died not many days after her settlement at Leicester House, and the Earl received the news with philosophical resignation. After that, the French Ambassador, Colbert, a brother of the great Minister, occupies Leicester House, and the Earl is rarely seen there, although the younger members of the family—the patriotic Algernon especially—resort to it when in town. At this period Evelyn dines at the house with Lady Sunderland, the Earl's niece, and after dinner the famous fire-eater Richardson is introduced, who roasts an oyster in his mouth, and performs other astonishing feats.

At this point it may be well to enquire whether there is anything left of Leicester House, as, if it has entirely disappeared from the face of the earth, it is of little use to recall its former history. Well, here is Leicester Place, with the Parcel Post Office on one hand, and a range of the basket-trucks devoted to that branch of the postal service occupying the pavement, while the small boys of the locality occupy themselves with playing see-saw on the trucks. On the opposite side is an hotel—a little bit of France in England—with its courtyard and bureau, the former occupied in summer time with little marble tables. At the top of the Place crosses Lisle Street, on the further side of which, looking down towards the Square, is a building with a kind of homely dignity about it, and adorned with cornice and balustraded parapet, which is evidently part of the old "corps de bâtiment" of Leicester House. A plaque upon it bears the inscription, "Leicester House,"

and another above, "Lisle St. 1791"; but these were doubtless inserted when the street was laid out at that date, while the building itself is evidently of earlier date, and bears the cachet of the early part of the eighteenth century, when the house was probably refronted. So we may cheerfully proceed with our record.

While Charles the Second was still King, Leicester Square had come into existence in its present alignment, with Leicester House presiding over the scene, its courtyard represented by the present Leicester Place, and its state entrance thrown back into what is now Lisle Street. Another large mansion occupied the rest of that side of the Square, which had been recently built by Lord Aylesbury, and which afterwards took the name of Savile House, now represented by the Empire Music Hall. In the rear of Leicester House towards the City, just behind the site of Mr. George Edwards' new theatre, was Newport House, the residence of a long-extinct Earl Newport, commemorated in Great Newport Street and the almost extinct Newport Market, where huge model dwellings have taken the place of the slums of other days.

Leicester Fields were all alive in 1698, when Savile House was occupied by Lord Carmarthen, to whom, as a congenial spirit who loved drinking and sailing, had been entrusted the charge of entertaining the Czar Peter. The Czar himself was content with much humbler lodgings, and could hardly be persuaded to show himself at the brilliant receptions at Savile House.

A few years later, in 1708, Leicester House was in the occupation of the Imperial Ambassador, and in 1712 crowds were drawn to witness the arrival of his guest, the famous Prince Eugène, the comrade in arms of the Great Marlborough, at that time in disgrace. Then we come to the era of the Guelphs, and we find the Prince of Wales in 1718 flying from St. James's after a desperate quarrel with his father, and taking refuge with his charming but fiery Princess at Savile House. Soon after the Royal party passed over to Leicester House, and the old mansion of the Sidneys became the court of the opposition, frequented by poets, wits, and savans, who were welcomed by the bright and clever Princess and her merry maids of honour. Of this date are Pope's gay lines "To Bellenden, Lepell, and Griffin," and his challenge to them to meet him and his friend Gay

At Leicester Fields, a house full high,
With door all painted green,

and his allusion to "garrets hung in green" may well be to the confined quarters of Leicester House, where the dormer windows that peep over the balustraded parapet may have witnessed the frolics of the laughter-loving girls,

Madge Bellenden, the fairest of the land,
And smiling Mary, soft and fair as down.

All this was changed in 1727, when news came from Hanover of old George's death, and George the Second was proclaimed King in front of Leicester House. Then came the courtiers in a crowd, and the saloons but lately a desert were thronged with gay people. Sir Robert Walpole walked through the saloons, and all the fine people turned their backs upon him, believing him to be irretrievably disgraced. Lady Walpole was elbowed and squeezed into a corner among the nobodies, till the new Queen caught sight of her, and with the remark, "There I see a friend," lifted her at once into the heaven of Court favour. The secret of the Minister's continued ascendancy in the new reign was at once divined, and as Lady Walpole remarked, she might have walked out on the people's heads.

Fifteen years after this, another Prince of Wales, on equally bad terms with his father, settled at Leicester House. This was Prince Fred, one of the most amiable and accomplished of the Guelphs, but too fond of fiddling and dancing to suit the robust taste of the period. In the early part of the year 1745, when his brother William was fighting at Fontenoy, the Prince was performing at Leicester House in Congreve's masque, "The Judgement of Paris," himself assuming the pleasing part of Paris. Then were Leicester Fields alive, from midnight till early morning, with flambeaux and gilt coaches and a mob of lacqueys, while a gay crowd kept up the revels within the Royal mansion.

But the Prince's real goodness of heart was evinced in the scenes which followed the rising of 1745, when he showed great kindness to the Jacobite prisoners, and exerted all his influence, which was not great, on the side of mercy. Lady Cromartie, whose husband was sentenced to death, brought her four children to Leicester House to implore the intercession of the Princess, whose only reply was to bring out her own children and place them by the side of the others. But in this case the princely influence was successful, and Cromartie was spared.

One of Prince Fred's birthday celebra-

tions, in 1748, was notable for the unveiling of an equestrian statue of his grandfather, George the First, which had been brought from Cannons, the Duke of Chandos's costly seat—Timon's villa—when the place was demolished. Man and horse were richly gilt, and for long the statue was regarded with something like awe by country yokels, as an evidence of the wealth of gold that was knocking about the streets of London. Its ultimate fate, too, comes within living memory, the mark of derisive comment from all sides, the object of all kinds of missiles, and the butt of the practical jokers of the period, some of whom painted the statue all over with black spots. At last the King was knocked off his horse, the steed itself was crippled, and the last relic of it were removed to make room for Baron Grant's improvements.

Prince Fred died in 1751, but the Royal widow and her children continued to reside there, and on the death of George the Second his grandson was proclaimed King in Leicester Square; two Kings in the half-century being not a bad record for our respectable but not majestic-looking Square. The Princess Augusta continued to live in the Square after her son's accession to the throne, but she left it for Carlton House in 1766. And then Leicester House fell into evil days, struggling on as Lever's Museum for some years, till that collection was disposed of by lottery.

By this time the Sidneys had become extinct in the main line, and their representatives were anxious to sell the London property to clear the estate at Penshurst, and Leicester Fields were bought by the Tulks for ninety thousand pounds. Leicester House was partly demolished and partly turned into Lisle Street, and the square itself entered into a period of decadence. Savile House, which had been occupied by the Royal children—a gallery formerly connecting the two houses—survived in one form or other to our own times. It was occupied by Miss Linwood's exhibition of needlework for many years; and after that all kinds of exhibitions found a temporary home there. Panoramas, tableaux vivants, bearded ladies and giants, industrious fleas and waxwork models, a café chantant, a billiard saloon—such were a few of the many purposes to which its rooms were turned. Down below—literally in the shades—was a cheap restaurant, where a repast of soup,

fish, and joint was served for the modest sum of eighteen pence. At last, in 1856, the whole affair was burnt to the ground, and out of its ashes rose, after sundry changes and vicissitudes, the present prosperous Empire Music Hall.

For the greater part of our century, indeed, exhibitions have been one of the specialties of Leicester Square. In the corner next Cranbourne Street a cross and an inscription, "Notre Dame de France," marks the entrance to what was once Burford's Panorama, now French Catholic schools and chapel. A little on this side, where the Parcel Post is now, Charles Dibdin, the song writer, gave his entertainment in what he termed the Sans Souci Theatre. The Alhambra Music Hall was originally started as an instructive and improving exhibition on the lines of the old Polytechnic, and called the Panopticon. In that direction Leicester Square has never achieved much success.

Standing by the bust of Newton, which occupies a corner of the ornamental enclosure, you can see Sir Isaac's old house in St. Martin's Street, which, in his time, was the main artery of Leicester Fields. Its neighbour is the Orange Street Chapel, and the house itself, which in old views is of red brick, has been stuccoed over, a formal three-storeyed house with three windows in a row. A lamp over the door announces it as now the "United Service Warrant Officers' Club," and a plaque affixed by the Society of Arts commemorates the tenancy of the great philosopher who lived there from 1710 to 1725, when he removed to die in Kensington.

The bust of William Hogarth commemorates the residence of the great artist in the square, where are now the Tennison Schools. The house has been altered and renewed, yet the great painter of mankind died within those walls, and the last scenes that met his eyes were in general character as we see them now. Over the way lived Sir Joshua Reynolds, in the house now occupied by Messrs. Puttick and Simpson, the auctioneers. The house has suffered little damage; the counting-house is Sir Joshua's front parlour; the balustraded staircase is still there, and Sir Joshua's gallery, lighted from above, where the great master exhibited his latest pictures, and which formed an antechamber to his painting-room, no longer in existence. The gallery is now surrounded by bookcases, which dealers and collectors are overhauling in view of the forthcoming

sale of books. In the centre is the auctioneer's rostrum, and vacant spaces are piled with bric-a-brac curios and antiques, all to come under the auctioneer's hammer.

A more recent habitué of the square was John Hunter, the great surgeon, whose house still remains in its original state, between the Tennison Schools and the Alhambra. But if you will come round to the back of the square, where Castle Street used to be, at the spot which none of the old frequenters of the square would recognise for the corner of Green Street, once Dirty Lane, so opened out it is with vistas of theatres and club-houses, and a new town hall for St. Martin's—there, on the old-fashioned side of the street, just opposite the Garrick Theatre, stands an old-fashioned house with an archway through it, closed by an old-fashioned iron grille, which was the back way to John Hunter's premises, and the yard where he kept his museum. And often has that grille been cautiously opened as cart or hackney coach drew up before it in the darkness of night, and precious dark old Castle Street was in Hunter's time with a twinkling oil lamp here and there, and then some object would be hauled out and hurried through the dark entry, while the iron gate would clang behind it.

And this old grille is a living witness—for such things live as well as we—to the story of John Hunter and the giant, which is well told by the late Tom Taylor, in his history of Leicester Square. Pat O'Brien was the name of the giant, famous in his day, and successful, too, for he had accumulated a nice little fortune, and lived retired at Epping. But at the time of writing, the giant was dying of consumption in Cockspur Street, at the advanced age, for a giant, of forty-six or seven—a quiet, retiring fellow, whose chief fear now was that he should figure in Hunter's Museum after his death; for he knew that the surgeon had his eye on him. There would be no rest for him in the grave if John Hunter was after him. Undertakers were, more or less, in the body-snatching business; sextons were as bad as any; and even were these faithful and vigilant, there was the professional resurrectionist, who would not be denied. So poor O'Brien left a sum of money with directions to hire a number of stout trusty Irishmen to carry his body to some place down the river, there to take boat for the Nore, and sink the coffin in deep water, where no groping

or raking could fish it up. The Irishmen were true and trusty, but the undertaker was a traitor. For the Irish were thirsty as well as trusty, and, at a given point on the way, were invited to a drink in a convenient public-house, where there was a convenient barn, where the coffin was locked up, while the bearers did their duty in winking with the whisky. Concealed in the barn were the undertaker's men, with their proper tools, who whipped out the poor giant's body in a trice, hid it in the straw, replacing it with stones of the proper weight, and making everything as before. The Irishmen, after a deep potation, marched off with their burden unsuspectingly, and buried it in the deep seas, while on the same night the undertaker gave the accustomed signal at the grille in Castle Street, handed in his prize, and received the promised reward. The giant's bones are still to be seen in the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, the bulk of which is formed by John Hunter's collection.

The great surgeon did not actually die in Leicester Square, for he died suddenly at a meeting of the governors of St. George's Hospital, in a fit of righteous indignation. But he was buried from the square—that is, his body was placed in the vaults under St. Martin's Church; and curiously enough his remains were resurrected, but in an honourable way, and to convey them to a more dignified resting-place, and that by Frank Buckland, whose account of the transaction is pleasant if gruesome reading.

Other scenes we may recall in connection with Leicester Fields, such as the pillage of Savile House by the Gordon rioters, a scene witnessed by Dr. Burney, the musician and father of "Evelina," Madame D'Arblay, who lived close by in St. Martin's Street. One would like to know something about the jovial clubs that existed in Hogarth's time at the various taverns round about, frequented by the actors and artists and literary notables of the period. An interesting circumstance is mentioned by Tom Taylor, that, in 1739, the artists hired a room in Peter's Court, St. Martin's Lane, close by, and that Hogarth gave them the apparatus, such as casts, stools, lamps, and so on, for this which was probably one of the first life schools of the kind in London.

We were in danger of forgetting the Great Globe which occupied the vacant ground in Leicester Square for a decade or two, dating from the Crimean War. There

was instruction again ; and if it could have been seen from the outside as a realistic globe, with diurnal revolution, and sun, moon, and stars all complete, it would have made a charming spectacle. But seeing it from the inside, just as if the globe were a filmy thing like a soap bubble, destroyed the illusion.

But everything points to Leicester Square becoming one of the great sites of the future. For it is in the line of direct communication with Piccadilly, and sooner or later a third great line of communication must come into existence from west to east between the Strand and Holborn. But that is an affair for you people of the twentieth century.

LITTLE WHITE-CAP.

A STORY IN NINE CHAPTERS.

By BARBARA DEMPSTER.

Author of "*Mrs. Dacre's Lady-Help*," "*The Bridge House*," "*Tabitha's Choice*," etc., etc.

CHAPTER VII.

MRS. JOLIFFE said nothing to Priscilla of what she had heard. Between the two there was always that barrier of the consciousness of a want of sympathy and comprehension. Priscilla bore this new trouble with the same still self-repression with which she had borne all the other anguish that had come into her life.

It was the inherited self-control, perhaps of generations of social discipline and high breeding, which not even the blood of the linen-draper's daughter had been able to deteriorate, which supported her. So Mrs. Joliffe chose to think, and she was very proud of her, though her manner never betrayed it. But it was the genuine affection that underlay the cold, proud exterior which prompted Mrs. Joliffe to take the step she did the next morning. Though it was intolerably painful for her to have to discuss with outsiders the shame and disgrace that had come into their lives, it was still impossible to let the matter pass unnoticed. The real story of the case must be made public. "To be the common property of every gossiping tea-table for the next fortnight !" so she said, with intense bitterness to herself.

But the truth was better, after all, than the lie which, started by Mrs. Dacre, was going about the neighbourhood. So, after breakfast, Mrs. Joliffe ordered the carriage

to be brought round, and drove off to the Vicarage to tell Mrs. Gay how shamefully Priscilla had been wronged. After the marriage with the nursery governess, with which his family considered that he had disgraced himself, and from which, indirectly, the other two unfortunate marriages had sprung, the Honourable John Saltmarsh had sunk gradually lower in the social scale, till finally he reached the level from which his wife had sprung, and in which lower social world, it must be confessed, he found an amount of kindness and honesty of purpose that was not surpassed in the higher planes from which he had fallen.

His brave little wife, proud of and idolising her handsome, aristocratic husband, did, indeed, at first, for his sake, make splendid efforts, if not to keep him up to his original social level, at least, to prevent him drifting completely apart from his social equals. But the task was beyond her strength. Indolent and indifferent by nature, and not overgifted in the way of brains, the Honourable John found the task of earning even bread and butter for his wife and child a difficult one. Various better berths he succeeded in obtaining were gradually lost, either by inattention or incapability, and finally he drifted into a small clerkship procured for him by his father-in-law, the linen-draper. The small salary coming from it was supplemented by his wife's earnings, who slaved herself slowly to death by giving lessons, doing every variety of house-work, and making every penny stretch to its uttermost. As soon as she was old enough, Priscilla, by her aunt's generosity, was sent to a good boarding-school, and as even many of her holidays, by her aunt's commands, were spent away from home, it was not till her mother was dying that she found out what the mode of life there had been. She was sixteen then, and in her heart she never quite forgave her aunt for insisting upon her being brought up so much away from home, and so being kept in ignorance of the state of affairs there. Neither her kindly, courtly father, nor her brave, sweet-tempered, heroic little mother had ever breathed a word to her of their difficulties, which, after all, fell with their greatest force on her mother. She only found it all out when her mother was dying. Then, when her mother was dead, she refused to return to school, or even to go and live with her aunt, who, it is only fair to say, had never really known how

terribly straitened the existence of her brother and sister-in-law had been, both with an equal, though different kind of pride, keeping their privations to themselves. In spite of her aunt's anger and arguments, of her offers to keep her brother from poverty if Priscilla would only return to school, Priscilla persisted in staying on in the little home in Dalston and taking up the burden of life her mother had so patiently and grandly borne, though not even half an ounce of blue blood had ennobled her veins.

Her father needed her help and companionship. With the loss of his wife the last spark of energy and vigour seemed to die out of his being. Physically and mentally he slowly broke down. The clerkship was given up, and they were compelled to live on what Priscilla earned by teaching. Mrs. Joliffe, grievously offended, taking no further notice of them.

For nearly two years this life went on, then the Honourable John died suddenly, and Priscilla was homeless. But during the last part of these two years Priscilla had made a friend. It was while going backwards and forwards to her work that by an accident she made the acquaintance of a young engineer. She had often noticed the young workman, who came back one day in the week by the same train as herself from his work in the big ironworks in which he was employed. She was always late home on this particular day.

One foggy winter evening, a man, taking advantage of the dark and deserted streets, followed her. He was making himself very unpleasant, when she saw him suddenly sprawling on the pavement, dropped by a well-directed blow from a man who had come up at the moment. It was her weekly fellow-traveller—the young workman, whose fine, intelligent face she had noticed often during the last month or two. He escorted her home, and told her his name and his occupation. She had always wondered at his being a mere workman. She found now that his work in the foundry necessitated the working dress, but that there was nothing else to distinguish him from the truest gentleman she had ever seen.

The acquaintance continued. She soon found that he was like no other man she had ever met. She also discovered after a time that even before she had noticed him, he had noticed her, and a little later again made another discovery, that their weekly travelling back together to Dalston

on that particular day—the day on which she was detained latest at the teaching, was not accidental on his part, and that during the dark winter evenings, though she had not known it, she had had a secret escort from the commencement of her journey at the crowded London terminus to the moment when she reached her own doorstep. In the meantime he had, at her invitation, called at the house, and her father, in spite of the fact that Will Deane frankly confessed that his father had been a blacksmith, took a great fancy to the strong, intelligent, self-educated young engineer who had, by his own talents and dogged perseverance, risen to be what he was. He was not a gentleman by birth, but he was a gentleman by instinct, study and reading doing the rest; and a lucky chance, which had thrown him into the companionship of a man far above him in the social scale, had given him the polish which had at first puzzled both Priscilla and her father.

When the Honourable John Saltmarsh died suddenly, and Priscilla was left homeless and unprotected, Will Deane asked her to be his wife. But they had understood each other long before that, and Priscilla, in spite of the blue blood inherited from her father, held it an honour to give herself to a man who, though he wore workman's clothes, and worked with his hands as well as his brains, was the truest, bravest, most chivalrous knight a woman's heart and soul could desire.

But Mrs. Joliffe thought otherwise. She was almost mad with shame and rage that still another of her flesh and blood should make such a low and fatal marriage.

Priscilla wrote to her to tell her of her father's death, and Mrs. Joliffe, as soon as she could travel, the shock aggravating her rheumatism from which she suffered, went up to the little house at Dalston to find her niece engaged to be married. Neither her anger, nor her reproaches, nor her entreaties could prevail. Not even the relation of her own bitter regret for the marriage she herself had made, and which, too, had been brought about through her brother's marriage, Stephen Joliffe having been introduced to her in her brother's house, could avail. Instead, Priscilla passionately resented the indirect insult to her mother, as being the cause of the meeting between one of her own class and the proud, aristocratic Miss Saltmarsh, and declared that it was her

aunt who had ruined Stephen Joliffe's life, rather than that he had done hers, and emphatically refused to give up her lover.

They parted in anger, and because Priscilla had no one now to whom she could turn, Will Deane insisted upon marrying her a month or two after her father's death. The months that followed were the happiest Priscilla had ever known—happier than she had ever hoped for.

Will Deane was raised to a different position in the ironworks, the master suddenly discovering that he had no ordinary workman in the silent, hard-working young man, with the strong, clever face, who came and went among his mates, much liked by them, yet never one of them. The rise made a great difference in their worldly means, and the little home they made for themselves in that unfashionable part of the world, Dalston, was more delightful to Priscilla than a house in Park Lane would have been without such a master. They could afford a few books, and flowers, and various little intellectual luxuries which Priscilla had not known in her own home.

Then a child came, and because the girl-mother did not regain strength, but filled her husband's heart with dread by her paleness and delicacy, he took out all the money he had been saving for the past few years as a means to satisfy the ambitious desire of his life, and determined to return her, for a few weeks, at least, to that social world from which he had taken her, fearing that the home he had given her had, after all, been insufficient to her nature. To please him, she fell in with his wishes, and she expressed a desire to go to France, of which country she was very fond. But she would not let him think that she needed anything but him and his love. She made no effort to cultivate the society of her social equals; so in that little French seaside village she and her husband and child lived for ten days or a fortnight a life of isolated, perfect happiness. Too perfect to last, she almost feared. And her fears were realised.

Just before this, Mr. Arthur Saltmarsh, now, for reasons best known to himself, going by the name of Long, came over to England and looked up his cousin, Mrs. Joliffe. He soon heard of the new mésalliance in the family. By a strange coincidence he found that he was acquainted with a secret in Will Deane's past, of the existence of which no one who knew him now even suspected. The eager way Mrs.

Joliffe grasped at even the possibility of separating Priscilla from her low-born husband decided him.

Deane had been married before to a woman who had turned out drunken and shameless, and from whom he had finally separated in intolerable disgust. He had left her in America, where he was at that time. Queerly enough, Mr. Long had come across her, and had heard from her lips an account of her marriage. The eager way in which Mrs. Joliffe seized on the chance, the passionate hatred with which she was moved against the young man, prompted Mr. Long to further effort in the matter. His cousin gave him a good sum to prosecute his enquiries, and promised besides to increase his allowance if he succeeded in breaking off the marriage. Curiously enough, so blinded was she by anger, and mortification, and dislike for the young man who, in spite of his low origin, had made her feel at a considerable disadvantage when she tried imperiously to make him give up Priscilla, taunting him with the reproach that he only hoped to get money with her, that she scarcely seemed to feel the shame she was bringing on the girl if the marriage were proved null and void. That came afterwards; but with it came the righteous satisfaction that she had done her duty by breaking up a marriage that was, after all, no marriage.

Mr. Long went up to town to institute enquiries. The result was made known in two letters. Will Deane received one in that little French seaside village, and Mrs. Joliffe the other. That for Deane was from the wife he believed had been dead for the last four years, but whose death he had—hating the very thought of the wretched, shameless creature—not troubled to certify. She was in London now, and she told him how she had heard, through a friend, of his new marriage. It was a reckless, devil-may-care sort of letter, winding up with a curse and a callous hope that he would enjoy the society of his new wife better than he had done that of his old one, and announcing her intention of going back to America, as she had plenty of money and did not want any of his yet. But she would come and call on him and his new wife when she did. Just such a letter as the poor, lost, degraded creature would write.

Mrs. Joliffe's letter was from Mr. Long, telling her that he had found the first Mrs. William Deane, and advising her to go

over to France at once to be with Priscilla. Mrs. Joliffe went. She arrived there only to find that Priscilla, with her husband and child, had left suddenly for England the day before—the very day that Deane must have received his wife's letter. For Mr. Long had told her that Mrs. William Deane was writing by the same post to her husband.

She at once divined that the young man, who could not be expected to be moved by any fine feelings, had not told Priscilla the truth, but had carried her off to some other place, so as to hide his whereabouts from his lawful wife, and she hurried back to England to the house in Dalston, never expecting for a moment to find them there.

But she found Priscilla and her child. Even she, during the dreadful weeks that followed, was forced to admit to herself that the man whom she had hated and despised was one of those rarely met, even in the great world of her own people. He had told Priscilla the truth within an hour of the receiving of the letter. He had brought her back to the home—theirs no longer—and had written to Mrs. Joliffe to come to her. She had missed the letter, having started for France before its arrival at her own house in the country. He had now taken a room some little distance away, and was arranging his plans for her future and the child's.

She found Priscilla prostrate—so changed that she could scarcely believe that it was the same girl who, a year ago, had been so radiant with courage and happiness. But the moment she uttered a reproach against Will Deane, Priscilla was roused into a passion of indignation, and she dared not utter another word.

But a reaction set in. Before a few days were over, Priscilla lay almost at the point of death. The terrible shock following on the delicate state of health she had been in, was more than her physical strength could bear. Then her child was carried off suddenly. For a fortnight they did not dare tell her of its death. When they did, Mrs. Joliffe felt ashamed and remorseful for the thankfulness she had felt that its poor little shamed life had ended. During Priscilla's illness,

Deane waited on her and watched over her with a ceaseless devotion that touched even Mrs. Joliffe. Night and day he was at her bedside. He could scarcely be persuaded to take food or rest. When she returned to consciousness he left her.

She struggled slowly back to life, and then, when the question of the future was once more to be faced, Mrs. Joliffe made a proposal to the young man. They were hard terms; but he accepted them at last, for Priscilla's sake. Priscilla was to go down to the Mill House and live there with her aunt. She was to be entirely dependent on her. Not a penny of the young man's money was to come to her.

"What have you brought into her life but shame and disgrace? What would your support of her be but an insult? You have nothing more to do with her life. Let her come back to those who have the right to protect and care for her," she said.

The young man's face grew very white as he listened to the hard, cruel speech; but he said nothing. The next day he agreed to the arrangement. He made no attempt to see Priscilla again. The little home was broken up. A few weeks later, after a stay at a quiet English watering-place, Priscilla went with her aunt to the Mill House. Deane left the ironworks; there was no one now to work for. He received another letter from his wife, in which she threatened to return to live in England. The threat had its effect. She was just the woman to carry out her threat, to molest and insult Priscilla with her presence. He wrote to the address she gave, to say that there was no use for her to do so, as he was leaving England, and that if she wanted help from him she must come to him, and gave her a direction in America. Then he left England. Since that day Priscilla had had no word from him. It had been one of the stipulations made by Mrs. Joliffe, and he, believing that it was best for Priscilla, kept his promise. All these plans had been made by Mrs. Joliffe and agreed upon by Deane while Priscilla was still too weak and helpless to know anything. It was this story that Mrs. Joliffe was going to tell Mrs. Gay.

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